United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council authorizes full deployment of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia; adopts unanimously Secretary-General's report recommending $26 million net reduction in financing of Force; appeals to parties concerned in Bosnia-Herzegovina to seek cease-fire and negotiated political solution.

+ Security Council asks United Nations offices in Baghdad and Tehran to investigate Sunday's Iranian Air attack over Iraq and to report back to the Council.

+ Lack of progress on Cyprus question makes it "unlikely" that United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus will be maintained on present scale, according to report by Secretary-General.

+ Secretary-General, on week-long visit to Geneva, meets two African Heads of State concerning situation in Liberia; opens current session of Economic Commission for Europe.

+ Anti-Apartheid Committee says European Community decision to lift oil embargo against South Africa contravenes United Nations resolutions.

+ Concern about minorities' rights, raised in Human rights Committee as it takes up report of Belgium.

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The Security Council today authorized the full deployment of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) and adopted the Secretary-General's report on a revised budget and deployment plan for the Force, in which he recommends a $26 million net reduction of the estimated expenses of the Force.

By its unanimous resolution, the Council urged all parties and others concerned to take all action necessary to ensure complete freedom of aerial movement for UNPROFOR and called upon all parties "not to resort to violence", particularly in any area where UNPROFOR was to be based or deployed. The

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Council also appealed to all concerned in Bosnia-Herzegovina to cooperate with the efforts of the European Economic Community (EEC) to bring about a cease-fire and a negotiated political solution.

By its resolution 743 of 21 February, the Council invited the Secretary-General to submit a first report on the establishment of the Force within two months of its adoption.

In his report to the Council, dated 2 April, the Secretary-General urgently requested that the Council authorize the full deployment of UNPROFOR as soon as possible, pointing to the fragility of the cease-fire. According to the report, the new financial statement stands at just over $607 million, 4.1 per cent lower than the preliminary estimate of $633.6 million.

Yesterday, Spokeswoman Nadia Younes told correspondents that due to the increasing tensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina reported by UNPROFOR Force Commander Satish Nambiar, the Secretary-General had asked him to look into the possibility of advancing the deployment of the military observers in the border areas between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.
(S/23777), (S/23788)

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The Security Council has asked the United Nations offices in Baghdad and Tehran to begin investigations of Sunday's air attack by the Iranian Air Force over Iraq, and to report, as soon as possible, to the Council to avoid any further escalation of the situation.

According to a statement issued by the Spokesman's Office today, the Council has been deliberating over the events, following representations made to the Council by both Iraq and Iran. The statement said members of the Council viewed the incident with great concern particularly because of the sensitivity of the region. The Council called upon all the parties concerned to desist from all acts of violence in conformity with its resolution 598 (1987) which called for a cease-fire and which, a year later, became the framework for the cease-fire agreement between Iran and Iraq.

Following Sunday's incident, Iraq protested the Iranian attacks calling them "an act of plain and unjustified aggression" in violation of the 1988 cease-fire agreement between the two countries. Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein asked, in a letter to the Council President, for "immediate and appropriate measures" by the Security Council.

Meanwhile, Iran has said that its air attack over Iraq was a "necessary and proportionate measure" in self-defence in response to an "armed and organized terrorist" operation against the Iranian villages of Beshkan and Bayani, in which four civilians were reported killed and seven wounded.

In a letter addressed to the Council President and the Secretary-General, dated 5 April, the Iranian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi, said the same "terrorist group" had previously carried out

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similar attacks from Iraqi territory against Iranian border civilian centres. The Government of Iran did not "seek any hostility with Iraq" and had already reiterated to Iraq its respect for that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, while reserving its right to take action in self-defence.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has concluded that "it is unlikely that the United Nations will be able for much longer to maintain peace-keeping presence in Cyprus, at any rate, on the present scale". He has pledged to undertake another determined effort to achieve a settlement, but has stressed that "if that effort does not succeed, consideration would have to be given to an alternative course of action in dealing with the Cyprus question".

The Secretary-General's conclusions were based on what he called "lack of progress" in his mission of good offices in Cyprus and the uncertainties expressed by three of the four main troop-contributing Governments about their roles in the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

In his report to the Security Council on Cyprus, dated 3 April, Mr. Boutros-Ghali expressed serious concern that despite repeated efforts to solve the situation in Cyprus, there had been "no progress" and in certain areas there had even been regression. Referring to the "very unsatisfactory" financing arrangements, the Secretary-General said he was of the view that, at a time of greatly increased demand for peace-keeping, a critical look had to be taken at long-lived operations, such as UNFICYP and the peace-making process it supports. He made the point that "if a Force has, for 28 years, maintained conditions in which peaceful settlement to a dispute can be negotiated but negotiations have not succeeded, it has to be asked whether that Force has a priority claim on the scarce resources that member States can make available to the Organization's peace-keeping activities".

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Following talks this morning with two African Heads of State, the Secretary-General today opened the forty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Europe at the Palais de Nations, as part of his week-long visit to the Swiss capital.

In his opening statement, the Secretary-General noted that the Commission with its long experience in East/West cooperation was one of the United Nations agencies most deeply involved in the transition in Eastern Europe and he stressed that this was the time for a "sober appreciation" of the grave problems facing Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union. To that end, the Executive Heads of the United Nations system would take up this week, under his chairmanship, the question of the transition process concerning those States, and the implications for the United Nations system.

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During his meeting with the two African Presidents, Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire and Abdou Diouf of Senegal, the Secretary-General congratulated the two leaders on their efforts to secure peace in Liberia. A Geneva-based United Nations press officer reported today that the two were leaders in Geneva for a meeting of the Ad Hoc Commission of the Western African States on Liberia and were coordinating talks with the parties to the conflict in that country.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents today that other subjects covered in the talks were on the situation in Somalia and the next Summit of the Organization of African Unity, (OAU) to be held in Dakar, Senegal in June.

In Geneva this evening, Mr. Boutros-Ghali will chair a meeting of United Nations agency chiefs. So far he has met with the Heads of four United Nations humanitarian and environmental agencies and was scheduled to meet with officials of several other organizations later this evening.

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The acting Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Jayaraj Acharya (Nepal), today expressed concern on behalf of the Committee about yesterday's decision of the Council of Ministers of the European Community at Luxembourg, to lift the oil embargo imposed by the Community against South Africa in September 1985.

In his statement, Mr. Acharya said the Special Committee considered such acts as extremely serious since they went against General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and would undermine the negotiations to bring about a peaceful end to apartheid by eroding the leverage that the international community had so effectively used to help advance the political process in South Africa.

While the Special Committee considered the political changes in South Africa, including the outcome of the all-white referendum, as significant impetus to move the negotiations forward, the process towards a non-racial democracy was, however, not yet irreversible, Mr. Acharya said.

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Foreigners could be excluded from residing in certain Belgian communes because a concentration of them could promote racist reactions, the representative of Belgium told the Human Rights Committee this morning as it began its consideration of that country's report on its efforts to implement the International Convention Civil and Political Rights.

Claude Debrulle, Administrative Director at the Ministry of Justice of Belgium, explained that the King was authorized to forbid certain categories of foreigners -- with the exception of nationals from the European Economic Community (EEC) countries -- from residing or taking up residence in a given commune if the population increase there would jeopardize the public interest.

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Experts from the Committee asked for more details on the limitations placed on foreigners and on the rights of minorities within the two majority Communities. They also raised questions about the direct applicability of the Covenant in Belgian law and about women's equality and prostitution.

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